Firing across the border in Jammu and Kashmir

3367. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA:
SHRI S. M. KRISHNA:
SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH:
SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:
SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:
SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that unprovoked firing is going on from across the border from Akhnoor to Kathua in Jammu sector for past few days and also in Kargil area;

(b) if so, the details of casualties of civilian and military personnel occurred in such firing; and

(c) the steps taken to control the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) While sporadic unprovoked small arms firings by Paklistani troops across the International Border and the Line of Control in J&K do take place, in Kargil sector, during the period from 9 to 13 April, 1997, Pakistani troops also resorted to artillery fire, not only on the forward defended locations but also in depth areas, including civilian targets in and around Kargil town.

(b) Since 1st January, 1997 to 30th April 1997, three personnel of the Army and Border Security Force were killed and six civilians and five Border Security Force personnel were wounded due to firing from Pakistani troops on the International Border from Akhnoor to Kathua. In the Kargil sector, two civilians were killed and four army personnel and eight civilians were wounded due to firing from Pakistani troops during this period.

(c) Appropriate and measured response is given by our troops to such unprovoked firings from Pakistani troops, taking due care that the incidents remain localised.

Accident of IAF Planes

3368. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Russian made IAF MIG-29 fighter air craft crashed near Pune recently killing the pilot;

(b) whether another MIG-21 crashed in Kangra district in Himachal Pradesh;

(c) if so, the number of Russian made MIG-29s that has been lost so far and the total number of aircrafts lost by IAF during the last three years;

(d) the estimated loss incurred by Government as a result thereof;

(e) the outcome of the inquiry conducted by the Government into the circumstances leading to accidents in Pune and Kangra; and

(f) the action taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) During the last three financial years, the IAF have lost 73 aircraft and suffered a provisional loss of Rs. 475.01 crores due to these accidents. 4 MIG-29 aircraft have been lost so far.

(e) and (f) The accidents at Pune and Kangra were mainly due to Technical Defects. A High Powered Committee under the Chairmanship of Scientific Advisor to Raksha Mantri has been constituted for indepth study of the accidents.

Creating new Artillery Division

3369. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether government propose to create a new Artillery Division as an important component of the Army; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?